

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column comprising

a female member adapted for slidingly receiving a male member therein and at least one metal strip fitted therebetween having an uneven contact surface, characterized in that said metal strips are strip is fitted between the male member and the female member and inside recesses at least one recess in a fastening cage which, in turn, is arranged clamped to the external surface of said male member.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said cage is clamped to the outside of the male member by means of deformations on the lateral surface thereof.

Claim 3 (previously presented): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said cage is injected directly on the male member.

Claim 4 (new): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 3, further comprising a plurality of metal strips fitted inside respective recesses of said cage.

Claim 5 (**new**): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column comprising:

- a female member adapted for slidingly receiving a male member therein;
- at least one metal strip having an uneven contact surface, a fastening cage fitted between the male member and the female member, said fastening cage having at least one recess, and said fastening cage surrounding said male member; and
- at least one metal strip received in said at least one recess.

Claim 6 (**new**): A low sliding load intermediate shaft in a motor vehicle steering column as claimed in claim 3, further comprising a plurality of metal strips fitted inside respective recesses of said cage.